

In Re Patent Application of:
CLARKE ET AL.
Serial No. 10/787,515
Filing Date: **FEBRUARY 26, 2004**

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful and thorough examination of the present application, and for withdrawing the previous rejections of the claims. Applicants submit that all claims are patentable and present arguments below supporting such patentability.

I. The Claimed Invention

Independent Claim 1, for example, is directed to a communications system comprising a plurality of account databases each for storing information associated with different accounts, and a central database for storing location information associating each account with a respective account database, and also for storing shared system setup information. The system also includes at least one communications device for accessing account information, and an interface device. The interface device is for receiving an account access request from the at least one communications device for a desired account, for retrieving account location information from the central database for the desired account, and interfacing the at least one communications device with the respective account database associated with the desired account based thereon, and for caching the account location information and using the cached account location information for subsequently interfacing the at least one communications device with the respective account database. The interface device also retrieves and caches the shared system setup information for use in interfacing the at

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least one communications device with the respective account database.

Independent Claim 9 is directed to an interface device sub-combination. Independent Claim 14 is directed to a method counterpart to Claim 1. Independent Claim 17 is directed to a related computer-readable medium.

II. The Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 9, 14, and 17 over Rierden et al. Rierden et al. discloses a subscriber management system that includes at least one Data Directory Server (DDS) located between one or more transaction generators and one or more data servers. The DDS routes transactions and provides data location functions. Based upon internal rules within the DDS and the particular transaction type, the DDS routes transactions to the appropriate servers. Transactions are classified according to where they may be executed. Specifically, transactions may be classified as SPECIFIC, ANY or ALL. (Col. 4, lines 11-28).

The system of Rierden et al. further comprises a X-REF server for storing the location information, global tables, so the DDS accesses the correct data server based upon the data needed by the transaction request. (Col. 8, lines 31-39). Rierden et al. discloses that the DDS may either access the global tables on the X-REF server on a per transaction basis or at start-up, by loading the entire global table for full and complete operation. (Col. 8, lines 40-50; Col. 9, lines 8-13).

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In contrast, independent Claims 1, 9, 14, and 17 recite receiving an account access request from the communications device for a desired account, retrieving account location information from the central database for the desired account, and interfacing the communications device with the respective account database associated with the desired account based thereon, and caching the account location information and using the cached account location information for subsequently interfacing the communication device with the respective account database. In other words, the claimed invention caches the retrieved account location information after it is requested by the communications device. Differently, the system of Rierden et al. loads the entire global table from the X-REF server to the DDS at startup. None of the other prior art of record makes up for these critical deficiencies of Rierden et al.

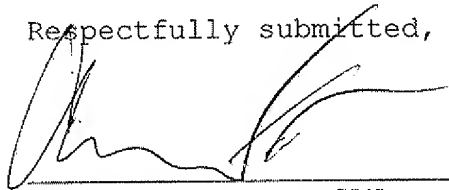
Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 9, 14, and 17 are patentable over the prior art. Their respective dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features, are also patentable over the prior art and require no further discussion herein.

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III. CONCLUSIONS

In view of the arguments presented above, it is submitted that all of the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTOPHER F. REGAN
Reg. No. 34,906
Allen, Dyer, Doppelt, Milbrath
& Gilchrist, P.A.
255 S. Orange Avenue, Suite 1401
Post Office Box 3791
Orlando, Florida 32802
407-841-2330
407-841-2343 fax
Attorney for Applicants